FBI agents spied for Russians but Hoover would not believe it, says top aide

STAR BOOK EXTRA

FOR MORE than 40 years J. Edgar Hoover ruled the Federal Bureau of Investigation with a rod of fear while he blackmailed and threatened congressmen and even Presidents.

But one thing he would never believe, says his former No. 3, WILLIAM C. SULLIVAN, was that an FBI agent would defect or sell information to the Russians — but they did.

THE STAR brings you another exclusive adaptation from a frank and riveting account of the empire the despotic director created, The Bureau — My Thirty Years In Hoover's FBI, written by Sullivan who was killed in a hunting accident shortly after finishing the book in collaboration with writer BILL BROWN. In it, he also reveals:

• AGENTS were expected to inform on their families.

• HOW his secretary spied on him for Hoover.

THE situation that disturbed me most during my 30 years in the bureau was Hoover's refusal to allow me to act on what I am convinced was Soviet intelligence operations that directly affected the FBI and security of the United States.

From time to time we had been successful in persuading Soviet officials to defect. Then suddenly the defections stopped. Programs that had worked in the past were no longer working and that began to trouble me.

I instructed one of the agents in the New York office to defect to the head of Russian intelligence, a man who worked out of the Soviet mission in the U.S.

It took our man three years, but he finally persuaded the Russians he was the genuine article: an FBI man who wanted money in return for secrets.

He gave them a lot over the next two years and was very successful in persuading them it was important. The Soviet Union spent millions of dollars in fruitless experiments trying to duplicate sophisticated military equipment that didn't work.

We knew it didn't work because we directed scientists to develop information that was wrong but would take the Soviets a lot of time and money to find out.

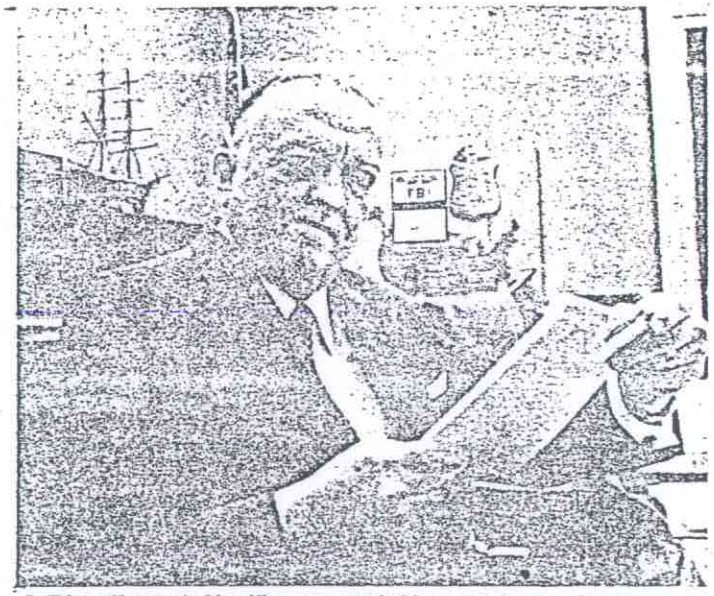
Our man was paid $20,000 by the Soviets for this misinformation and we turned it over to the Treasury Department.

One evening the Russian intelligence chief asked our man to meet him in Riverside Park in New York City at 1 a.m. They met and conducts surveillances — but that he was indeed a very important counterespionage agent who would never defect and who was all that time operating against them.

There was never any doubt in my mind that the Russians could only have learned our man's real job if there was a Russian spy in our New York office.

The leaks continued to vex us. I told Hoover what had been happening and recommended we begin gradually transferring people out of the espionage section in New York. I wanted to replace them all with new men.

It was the only realistic way we could hope to get rid of the fellow on the Soviet



J. Edgar Hoover in his office, surrounded by mementoes. . .he was a man with his head in the clouds, according to his one-time No. 3.

'He was an amateur when it came to the realities of espionage'

William C. Sullivan

learns that we have been penetrated by the Russian KGB."

Hoover said: "I know that, but no transfers."

The next day I sent him a sealed memorandum.

In it I repeated the details that proved we had been penetrated by the Russian intelligence service. Hours later the memo was returned to me and on the margin Hoover had written: "As I told you, find out who it is."

Hoover never asked me a question about it after that. He never asked: "How is it going?" Nothing. He never again brought it up.

On another occasion I learned that the Washington field office was missing three top-secret documents that were connected with naval operations.

A Soviet defector who had come over to us before this period told us that an FBI agent had sold the files to the Soviet Embassy.

We asked the Russian for his name, but he said he never knew it. But he knew that the agent had gone to the Soviet Embassy, to its naval attache, and asked for $10,000 for the three documents.

One agent in the Washington field office was [illegible]

fortunately, he recognized one of his colleagues from Baltimore and drove quickly away.

We learned that he broke his contact with the Soviet KGB and although he would never admit to selling out to the Russians, he requested, and received, early retirement from the FBI.

When it came to the realities of espionage, J. Edgar Hoover was a head-in-the-clouds amateur.

He didn't believe that an FBI agent would ever defect or sell information to the enemy.

However, I knew that the men in the FBI were human though, and I always worried that their personal or financial problems could leave them vulnerable to our enemies.

Not only were there Soviet spies in the FBI, but also internal spies.

One of my secretaries was an informant for Hoover and his inseparable No. 2, Clyde Tolson.

She kept tabs on my phone calls and my appointments and even tried to eavesdrop on my meetings.

She would come in and very slowly shuffle the papers on my desk, pretending to be looking for something.

J. Edgar Hoover in his office, surrounded by mementoes. . .he was a man with his head in the clouds, according to his one-time No. 3.

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We knew it didn't work because we directed scientists to develop information that was wrong but would take the Soviets a lot of time and money to find out.

Our man was paid $38,000 by the Soviets for this misinformation and we turned it over to the Treasury Department.

One evening the Russian intelligence chief asked our man to meet him in Riverside Park in New York City at 1 a.m. They met and walked in silence for about 10 minutes.

Then the Russian said: "In case anything goes wrong we have set up this escape route for you through Canada to Russia and I've got to have your right name."

For the first time in two years our man slipped and gave the Russian his real name. The next day the whole operation was dead. The Russians wouldn't have any contact with him again, although he repeatedly tried to reach them.

They knew he had not only lied to them about his position — he had said he was a watcher, a person who conducts surveillances — but that he was indeed a very important counterespionage agent who would never defect and who was all that time operating against them.

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The leaks continued to vex us. I told Hoover what had been happening and recommended we begin gradually transferring people out of the espionage section in New York. I wanted to replace them all with new men.

It was the only realistic way we could hope to get rid of the fellow on the Soviet payroll.

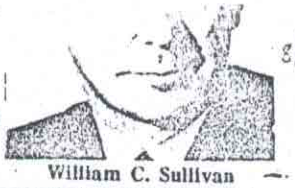
Hoover said: "Find out who he is." I repeated to him that it was impossible, that whoever it was was too deeply covered to allow himself to be revealed by any of our internal investigations.

Then he said: "Some smart newspaperman is bound to find out that we are transferring people out of our New York office."

I repeated to him it could be done quietly and gradually and that no-one would know.

And I told him: "Mr. Hoover, your reputation is going to be severely tarnished if the public ever

it came to the realities of espionage?



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One agent in the Washington field office was suspect because of his unusually large gambling debts and because of information defected Russians gave us.

We narrowed our investigation to him and we learned that he was contacted by Soviet agents from a certain phone booth at certain hours.

To prevent the agent from realizing that we were onto him, I ordered men from the Baltimore office to watch him. At the exact time we were told he would be in the telephone booth, he arrived. The phone in the booth rang; he spoke to the caller for a while and then left.

On his way out, unfortunately, he recognized one of his colleagues from Baltimore and drove quickly away.

We learned that he broke his contact with the Soviet KGB and although he would never admit to selling out to the Russians, he requested, and received, early retirement from the FBI.

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She would come in and very slowly shuffle the papers on my desk, pretending to be looking for something. I loved to put her on the spot and ask her exactly what she was looking for.

Of course, I used to feed her the same sort of misinformation the bureau fed to double agents, which she faithfully carried back to Hoover and Tolson.

Hoover even expected his agents to inform the bureau if they were having marital problems or trouble with their children.

He didn't give a damn about the people involved — he just didn't want the bureau embarrassed.

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